(e) if so, how many of them have been constructed and the reasons for not constructing the remaining ones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government had constitued an Authority known as the Environmental Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority for the National Capital Region on 29.01.1998.

(b) and (c) The Authority had been constituted with the objective of protecting and improving the qualityof the environment and preventing, controlling and abating environmental pollution. The Authority monitors the progress of the action plan drawn up by the Ministry of Environment & Forests on Pollution in Delhi as contained in the 'White Paper on Pollution in Delhi with an Action Plan' issued by the Central Government on 03.12.1997. The Authority is submitting progress reports to the Hon'ble Supreme Court and to the Ministry of Environment and Forests. A focus of the Authority is control of vehicular pollution. The action plans at various stages of planning and implementation. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, there has been a decline in pollution from sulphur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen and suspended particulate matter in Delhi. There has been a significant decline in lead pollution.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Supreme Court had directed construction of 15 Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) for treating industrial waste. Work has been awarded for construction of three CETPs. The main cause for delay in construction of CETPs relates to issues pertaining to cost sharing.

Air Pollution

1002. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are Government's plans to improve the air pollution level due to heavy vehicular traffic; and

(b) whether Government intend to make a law by which the cars must be off the road at least once a week, to improve the environment for future generations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) To improve the pollution

level in the air due to heavy vehicular traffic, the steps taken by the Government include: phasing out of leaded petrol, notification of stringent emission norms effective from 1.4.2000, improvement in fuel quality and improvements in traffic management systems.

(b) No such law is being framed.

Endangered Bio-Diversity of North-Eastern Region

1003. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether bio-piracy has threatened the entire bio-diversity of the North-Eastern region;

(b) whether famous species of previous flora and fauna are fast disappearing into oblivion;

(c) whether the population of one-horned rhino and tigers in Kaziranga is shrinking because of poachers; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to protect the bio-diversity in this region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) No, Sir.

(d) Actions that are being taken to protect the biodiversity in this region *inter alia* include:

— Survey, identification and monitoring of the floral and faunal resources by the Botanical Survey and Zoological Survey of India, respectively.

— Setting up of the protected area network consisting of 12 National Parks, 35 Wildlife Sanctuaries and four Biosphere Reserves.

— Implementation of species specific conservation programmes such as Project Tiger and Project Rhino.

— Implementation of management action plans for conservation of Loktak (Manipur), Deepar Beel (Assam) and Rudrasagar (Tripura) wetlands.